

# JOURNAL

OF THE

## BRITISH SOCIETY OF DOWSERS

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No. 2

DECEMBER, 1933

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PUBLISHED BY  
THE BRITISH SOCIETY OF DOWSERS  
BACKWOODS, LINDFIELD, SUSSEX

*Price to Non-Members, 1/-*

# BRITISH SOCIETY OF DOWSERS

## COMMITTEE

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## OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY

(a) To encourage the study of all matters connected with the perception of radiation by the human organism with or without an instrument.

(b) To spread information amongst members, by means of a journal, lectures and other means, about the use of dowsing for geophysical, medical and agricultural and other purposes and for tracing objects animate or inanimate.

(c) To keep a register of dowsers for water, minerals, oil, and for other purposes.

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## RULES OF THE SOCIETY

### *I.—Membership.*

The Society is open for all persons interested in radiation-perception.

The Committee has power to appoint honorary members.

### *II.—Subscription.*

The subscription is five shillings per annum, or three guineas for a life member.

### *III.—Management.*

The Society will be managed by a Committee consisting of a President, who will act as Chairman, and five members, one of whom will act as Treasurer and Secretary.

The President and members will be replaced as necessary by the Committee, appointments being confirmed at a General Meeting.

All questions regarding the publication of the journal, lectures, meetings, etc., will be settled by the Committee.

Decisions of the Committee will be arrived at by correspondence if necessary, the facts being recorded in the Minute Book.

Decisions will be decided by a majority vote, the Chairman having a casting vote.

The Committee has power to co-opt other members for special purposes.

### *IV.—Accounts.*

The financial year will be from July 1st to June 30th.

Accounts will be published annually within two months after the end of the financial year.

Accounts will be audited privately.

### *V.—General Meeting.*

A General Meeting will be held annually, and other meetings when considered necessary by the Committee.





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NOTICES

SUBSCRIPTIONS and applications for membership should be sent to the Honorary Secretary and Treasurer.

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Communications for the Editor and inquiries should be addressed to Colonel A. H. Bell, Backwoods, Lindfield, Sussex.

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The meeting at 12 Park Crescent, on October 3rd, was attended by some twenty-four members and their friends.

Dr. Munro gave a short account of his system of diagnosis. Miss Turner, who has considerable experience as a dowser for water and minerals, described her method of working. It is interesting to note that for her lead produces stronger reactions than water and that the rule of the right-angled isosceles triangle works satisfactorily without regard to differences of strata.

Mr. T. H. Darlington explained how he uses his remarkable powers as a dowser for horticultural purposes and showed us how a steel spring is used by dowsers in coal-mining.

Our thanks are due to Dr. Munro for placing his consulting room at our disposal and for kindly providing tea.

The next meetings are to be held at 12 Park Crescent at 4 p.m., on Thursday, December 7th, and Thursday, February 15th.

\* \* \* \* \*

One of our members has sent us the following account of an experiment :

‘I set up a miniature flagstaff in the middle of my card-table by passing a penholder or pencil through the hole in a reel of cotton. Working round it with the rod, I get a reaction when the rod, flagstaff and sun are all in alignment. If I were to do this every hour throughout the day I could chalk out an accurate sun-dial. After sunset I get the reaction on the east side of the flagstaff, and this continues till about 45 seconds before midnight when it fades and the rod droops. If I now move round to the west side the

energy will come back gradually to my rod, and by 45 seconds after midnight it is as definite on the western as it had been a few minutes before on the eastern side.

\* \* \* \* \*

Whalebone for divining rods can be obtained cut to size from Messrs. Devine and Co. Ltd., St. Stephen's Road, Old Ford, London, E.3.

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*Errata* : In the September journal on page 12, line 11 from the bottom, for 'quantity' read 'quality'.

On page 13, line 6 from bottom, for 'B' read ' $\beta$ '.

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The Editor would be glad to receive contributions of the following kind, but regrets that at present no fees can be paid for articles or reviews :

1. Descriptions of methods which have proved accurate for finding the depth and quantity of water, minerals, etc.
2. Description of any unusual form of Dowsing Instrument and the method of using it.
3. Accounts of any exceptional cases of successful Dowsing operations.
4. Information about the use of Dowsing for medical and agricultural purposes, and of the reactions to mitogenetic and other electromagnetic rays.
5. Information about the perception of radiation caused by sound and scent, and about the tracing of animate and inanimate objects.
6. Reasonable theories to account for the phenomena of Dowsing.
7. Information about the practice of Dowsing amongst native races.

The Editor will be glad to have the names of any members who will review foreign books or journals.



## THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS AT PARIS

UNDER the presidency of the Vicomte Henry de France the *Congrès International de Radiesthésie* was held this year at Paris from June 6th to 9th.

The Congress was attended by about 150 delegates from the various Departments of France, from Algeria, Morocco, Syria,

Belgium, Italy, Switzerland and Great Britain. The British Society of Dowsters was represented by Dr. Wright, Captain Edney, R.E., and Colonel Bell; Miss Edney also attended and it is to her that we are indebted for these notes.

It is worthy of record that Captain Edney attended on behalf of the R.E. Board, and can, therefore, be regarded as a representative of the War Office.

Amongst the French delegates were numerous senior army officers, doctors and engineers and several ladies. There were also present the President of the Academy of Medicine and the Director of the *Service des Eaux* of Paris, and Monsieur l'Abbé Mermet, whose reputation as a dowster stands very high.

Meetings were held during the morning and afternoon of June 6th and 7th at the hall of the *Société d'Horticulture*, when papers were read, and discussions took place. On Thursday, June 8th, an expedition was made to Haute-Isle, near Mantes, and on the 9th the Congress terminated.

Throughout the meetings the Press and the camera were very evident and there were reports of the proceedings in most of the French papers.

The Congress was opened on the morning of June 6th by M. Le Vicomte de France. He reported that societies now existed in Germany, Italy, Great Britain, Spain, Belgium and Switzerland, whilst in France many provincial societies had been formed.

M. Brouard read a paper on the legal position of the dowster.

Cavaliere De Vita, President of the Italian Society, demonstrated a portable apparatus of his own invention, which consists of a box containing thermionic valves coupled to a metal aerial and a galvanometer.

The instrument is sensitive to minute changes of potential, so that a movement of the needle is obtained by waving a stick a few feet away. It provides a check on the indications obtained by the dowster.

As regards divining generally it was agreed that factors of measurement such as volume and depth are largely personal.

Various delegates emphasized the fact that a dowster using his art in connexion with any particular subject should be possessed of some knowledge of the subject itself. Thus a knowledge of geology is of value to a water diviner, whilst anyone who uses dowsing for biological purposes should possess a knowledge of medicine.

M. Merlan stated that the reactions of the pendulum and rod are affected by their colour. Thus it is not possible to analyse by divining a substance standing on a white cloth.

A French sportsman, M. de la Bastide, exhibited a hunting whip with a copper and zinc stock which he used for discovering the direction of his quarry. Fishermen supplied information of the same nature.

The afternoon session was opened by M. Le Vicomte de France who read a paper on Geology and Geophysics. He said that a knowledge of geology would reveal the position of water-bearing regions, the diviner's task being to find the exact spot for a boring and to give the depth and quantity. There are several methods for gauging depth, such as by ascertaining the maximum height above the ground that the pendulum will gyrate over water, or by noticing the distance from the centre of a stream at which the rod will react a second time. Estimation of yield is a personal factor to be worked out by each individual. He also described the new apparatus for mineralogical analysis invented by MM. Brard and Gorceix.

M. Larvaron followed with a paper on Agriculture. He said that dowsing could decide the suitability of soils for certain crops and of forage for animals; the chemical manures necessary for different soils; the fertility of seeds and the vitality of trees.

On June 7th the meeting was opened by Dr. Leprince, a well-known medical specialist of Nice who carries out his diagnosis and selects his remedies by means of a dowsing instrument. He said that for several years the power to diagnose disease with the aid of the rod or pendulum had been recognized. Most dowzers, such as Abbé Mermet and Dr. Regnault prefer the pendulum. As the dowser was liable to be affected by auto-suggestion, any diagnosis made by him should be confirmed by a qualified medical man. Diagnosis was the important feature of the dowser's work, the cure was the doctor's business.

The usual method of diagnosis was to use the index finger of the left hand as a moving pointer over the patient's body, the pendulum being held in the right hand. The gyration of the pendulum reverses when the finger is in proximity to a diseased organ, the type of disease being indicated by the use of pendulums or rods of different colours.

A hospital has been opened in the Philippines where diagnosis is carried out by dowsing. Dr. Leprince has a very sensitive galvanometer to confirm his results. He referred to the practice of diagnosis from photos stating that though such methods were at present regarded as magical, a physical explanation would in time undoubtedly be forthcoming.

In this medical aspect of dowsing the personal factor is again prominent, one doctor stating that he could detect disease by the



temperature induced in his hands when holding the rod over the patient—he found this infallible for tuberculosis.

A delegate objected that doctors as a whole scoffed at dowsing, but it was pointed out that whereas in 1930 no doctors belonged to the Association since then 75 had joined.

Much argument ensued between doctors and non-medical dowisers from which the prevailing opinion seemed to be that a doctor should not attempt to effect a cure unless he were a qualified man.

In the afternoon a paper was read by M. Armand Viré on dowsing from maps, plans and photos. The usual system was to use the index finger of one hand as a pointer over a map and to observe the reaction of the pendulum held in the other hand. Opinion was divided as to the soundness of this method, but it was evidently successful with some dowisers. A competition was organized in France last year but the results were not good. Abbé Mermet stated that he had always been successful in divining from maps.

On Thursday, June 8th, about 150 delegates and 40 Press representatives travelled to Haute-Isle, about 70 kilos from Paris, in char-à-bancs and motor-cars for a practical demonstration of dowsing at the troglodytic village.

This village consists of a series of caves in the chalk escarpment which were occupied in very early times, numerous traces of occupation being still visible. There is also a church cut out of chalk. The place belongs to Dr. Gaudichard who is himself much interested in dowsing and organized the expedition. Practically every dowser present traced out an underground stream which ran under the face of the slope. Near the top of the hill this stream broke through the surface as a spring and then disappeared underground again. Human remains were divined in some of the caves and traces of gold and silver were found. In the church the position of the head and feet of a lay skeleton were traced out, this result being confirmed by the parish priest. Laymen were buried with their heads to the east, and priests with their heads to the west.

Various kinds of dowsing instruments were used: one strange phenomenon was provided by a man whose whole body became violently agitated when over water, he revolved over human remains and was thrown to the ground over gold.

The morning's proceedings terminated with déjeuner which was served in the open air.

The Congress closed on Friday morning when M. Le Vicomte de France gave a brief résumé of the results. Next year's Congress was considered; it will probably take place at Lausanne.

It was proposed that the methods of the various leading dowsers should be tested. The President concluded by saying that the original 25 members in 1925 were regarded as charlatans and sorcerers by the newspapers. In 1933 there were several hundred members, they had their own monthly paper; there were many books on dowsing; newspapers had sent their leading representatives to the Congress. A regular course in dowsing is given at the *Ecole Militaire du Génie*. Dr. Gaudichard is the first doctor to institute a clinic in which dowsing is combined with the practice of medicine.

The English delegates were most kindly given an invitation which enabled them to attend the Congress including the excursion to Haute-Isle without paying the statutory subscription; and they were throughout treated in most friendly fashion by their Allies in the art of dowsing.

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## WATER DIVINING

### I.—A History of the Phenomenon

By Major C. A. POGSON, M.C.

*(Formerly Official Water Diviner to the Bombay Government)*

WATER divining is in itself a misleading term, and so at the outset I emphasize that the word 'divining' must not be confused with any sacred thing, but only as implying discovery or location of underground water. It has been in practice in nearly every country in the world, although as regards the methods employed there has always been a marked difference between the East and the West, for whereas in Western countries only one method has been used, in Eastern lands there have been many and various ways adopted. In Western countries the universal method consists of the utilization of the arms and the hands, whilst of the many methods employed in Oriental countries I have already, from experience, come across water divination by means of astrology, by the relative position of trees and shrubs, by the positions of stones, by use of the senses of sight or hearing or smell, by mental concentration, by some intuitive occult means difficult to define, by trance revelations, by body vibrations, by the majority verdict (in India) of the village council or panch-namas, and other methods equally impossible of producing results. From a careful study of the above methods, however, it

is seen that they can be divided into two main parts—those methods which appear to depend upon the actual underground water as an influencing agent and those which are based on outside objects totally unconnected with the water. Among the former can be classed employment of the hands, the senses, and the body generally, while among the latter astrological calculations, existence of trees, etc., can be included.

#### METHODS OF DIVINING

My meaning will be made clear by the following example. He who claims to be able to locate water by his hands should always be able to find the same supply of water as long as it exists, for he bases his methods on the actual existence of such water; but he who professes to find it by the study of the existence of trees, etc., would be entirely non-plussed if the trees were removed, although the water would still be there. Those who base their knowledge on astrological reasoning or the growth of trees, etc., do so by the perusal of ancient writings on the subject, i.e., they learn the subject as one might learn geography, from existing writings, and they simply follow what the book says and give the answer the book gives. It will be readily seen that here they differ from the other class, who give the answer dependent on an effect produced on themselves. I do not here propose to dwell on the success or non-success of these various methods, for it is merely my intention to remove several misapprehensions expressed in various letters and articles as to the basis of the method employed by myself, which is similar to that used by water diviners in Europe, Australia and America, i.e., by the instrumentality of the hands. After explanation, I leave it to the reader to decide the possibility or non-possibility of success which must attend other methods.

#### OLD RECORDS

When preparing a paper which I read before the Congress of Engineers in Bombay in 1923, I had occasion to refer to old records in the British Museum and the writings of several learned investigators in order to obtain an historical record of the practice of water divining as known in Western countries, and it will not be amiss to give a brief account of such history here. In Western countries the rod is invariably associated with the water diviner. The earliest mention I could find of the use of a forked or Y-shaped twig was in A.D. 1500, when it was utilized solely in prospecting for minerals. The miners of Saxony appear to have been the first to use it. In those days there was a common superstition that veins of metal attracted certain trees, which

drooped over the place where the ores were to be found. Originally two branches were tied together at one extremity and the unfastened ends were held in each hand. From this it was an easy transition to the use of a forked or Y-shaped twig. Be it noted, however, that probably owing to the superstition of the suitability of certain trees, none ever questioned or wondered why a Y-shaped twig was essential. In Queen Elizabeth's reign the exploitation of the Cornish mines was carried out by a few notable 'merchant venturers', and a delegation of these proceeded to Saxony to investigate methods of prospecting and mining for ore. And shortly afterwards we read that the divining rod was employed in Cornwall, the presumption being that a diviner returned with the party.

#### THE ROD METHOD

As might be expected, the rod method was first used for finding water in the south-west of England, but it was not until the end of the eighteenth century that it came into general use for this purpose in England although there are records of its being employed in France and Spain two centuries earlier. From those days to the present time there are constant records, and among other notable names of the nineteenth century I would mention Messrs. John Mullins, Tompkins, Jones, Stone, and Dean Ovenden as being most successful diviners. A Y-shaped twig was used by all these gentlemen, but the remarkable fact is that even after all these years no thought arose as to why this particular shape was essential.

*(To be continued)*

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### NOTES ON JOHN CLARKE'S METHODS

By ELVAN

JOHN CLARKE'S repeated success in locating bodies has brought him many letters of enquiry from dowisers in several countries. As he has not felt equal to dealing with them, some account of his methods may be of interest.

*Samples.* For identification he uses a sample of clothing, held in either hand with the rod.

*Rods.* He generally used a hazel rod for finding the line, and one of copper wire for exact position. He has now abandoned hazel for whalebone, the sizes of the latter vary from 50 cm.

by 4 mm. by 4 mm., to 45 cm. by 3 mm. by 3 mm.; they are bound together at the top with white plaster. The copper rods are made of thick copper wire, sides some 24 inches, twisted to have a 6-inch loop at the top. A reaction with the copper rod has a stronger physical effect and makes him gasp.

*Amplifier.* A blue liquid which he dabs on the copper rod. With hazel or whalebone he sometimes uses either a ring of thin copper wire held by his little finger, or a copper coin held in the hand; both doped with the blue liquid. He maintains that the doped copper, which he calls his magnet, acts as an amplifier. Occasionally he winds doped copper wire round his arms above the elbows, or round his ankles.

He thinks that the efficacy of this 'magnet' may be peculiar to himself. The wire ring, or coin, made no difference to me.

*Grip.* The hazel or whalebone rods are held thus: The forefinger is sharply crooked, the end of the rod side lies across the first phalange, the next inch or so across the joint between the second and third phalanges. The top phalange of the thumb presses the rod against the forefinger, the chief pressure being against the joint. Consequently the palms face each other instead of being upturned. He holds the rod tightly, putting considerable tension on it by forcing the hands strongly towards each other. The hazel rods were constantly breaking.

The copper rod is gripped between the second and third fingers, with the fists clenched.

*Hand Position.* To get the line of a distant object he holds his hands level with his forehead, thus getting the 'high rod' action, a dip—with a sample—in the direction of the object.

*Method.* The rough direction is found by facing round the horizon to get the dip towards, and the lift away.

To get the exact line he faces at right angles to the rough direction (the rod points up), he then swings the body quickly round to face the line, the rod straightens out into a dip on it, but owing to the great tension cannot quite reach the horizontal. It lifts sharply 'off' on either side. The fineness obtained is under 10 degrees.

Secondly, from the right angle position, he swings sharply round to face directly away from the line, the rod dips towards the object pointing through his head at it, there is a similar lift 'off'. He seems to prefer this 'facing away' method, and certainly the 'pull back' seems stronger than the 'pull forward'.

He puts great physical and nervous intensity into the action, maintaining that the more he puts into it, the better the result.

The position of the object is thus found by successive shots.

In the case of the first body recovered the original shot was taken from Clarke's farm ; the distance from there to the place where the body was found is  $11\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

At the spot he puts in a peg on each bank to guide the men working the drag, but the exact position can be determined from a boat to a circle of 5-10 ft. diameter, depending on the depth.

In the case of No. 2, when the body was being towed ashore, the chauffeur denied that it could be his master as he had no coat, but Clarke could feel with his rod that the body he was looking for was moving.

He states that recovery is the real difficulty, irons when available being as a rule not well designed for the job, and the police often unaccustomed to boats and dragging.

Clarke has developed this technique and facility by years of practice with people, cattle, pigeons, dead dogs, etc. He claims to have found eight bodies. Some examples, one in detail :—

1. Thomas W. Wilson, a commissioner, of Leicester. Waistcoat taken to Clarke at his farm. Body located in R. Soar at Thurmaston ( $11\frac{1}{2}$  m. from first shot). Dragging failed. Some days later men sitting on the bank at the place saw the body come to the surface. Inquest, Barkby. Report, *Morning Post*, 21/3/33.

2. Dudley R. Walker, lace manufacturer, of Nottingham, last seen walking along Trent bank near Hazleford Ferry, 30th March. Body located and dragging successful. Inquest, Nottingham, 4/4/33. Report, *Daily Mail*, 5/4/33.

3. William Benson, aged 8, of Carlton, Notts., missed in March. Body located in Trent near Hazleford Ferry about 10th April. Drags came in contact with something heavy which slipped off. Body believed to be the boy's, found close by on 6th June. Reports, *Daily Mail*, 11/4/33, and *Daily Mirror*, 7/6/33.

4. Raymond Keyworth, aged 6, of Gainsborough, missing April 1st. Clarke arrived Gainsborough 16th, in evening located body in Trent at a spot between Wildsworth and East Ferry villages (respectively  $7\frac{1}{2}$  and 9 miles by river below Gainsborough), some unsuccessful dragging done before dark.

Next morning Inspector drove Clarke to place, the rod showed that the body had moved up the river (tide flowing). Directly afterwards man arrived on bicycle, told Inspector body had been seen on water's edge near Ravensfleet ( $1\frac{1}{4}$  m. above Wildsworth). Clarke said, 'Do not tell me where, I will take you to it'. Inspector drove Clarke along river.

Owing to high flood bank between, river cannot be seen from road. After driving a mile or so, Clarke said, 'Stop'. On climbing bank body was found lying on foreshore at water's edge directly below. It was removed to Wildsworth, inquest there 18th. Report, *Daily Mail* and *News-Chronicle*, 18/4/33. Full report of inquest, *Retford & Gainsborough News*, 21/4/33. (In this case only, exact details carefully ascertained, in Gainsborough.)

5. Mrs. Kate Jay, aged 69, of Long Eaton, missing 11 weeks, located in Trent near Barton Ferry 18th April. Dragging failed. Report, *Daily Mail*, 19/4/33. Unrecognisable body of woman recovered nearby several weeks later.

6. In May Clarke was asked to go to Knaresborough to look for a man who had been missing for nearly a year. He located the body in some submerged timber in the River Nidd. While Clarke and the police were away at lunch, some men could not resist moving the timber, the body came to the surface, but was carried away by the current, went over a weir, and broke up. It was quite black. (Verbal from Clarke.)

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## A DOWSING TYRO IN AFRICA

By E. E. MUDD, M.B.E.

THE disappointing 'rainy season', of 1922, in North-Western Rhodesia with the consequent drying up of the dams was the immediate cause of the discovery that I could feel the vibrations of underground water.

In this case it was not difficult to find, for the land was on the border of dolomite country, and we knew that somewhere in the valley above the dams water could be tapped fairly near the surface.

On returning to England in 1924, and when wishing to learn more about dowsing, I was fortunate enough to hear of Mr. Timms, who was the first to show me how much more there was in this science than I had supposed. In 1926, when again about to leave for Africa I had the good luck to meet with Mr. Fordham, with the result that included in my luggage were four uncut publications of M. Henri Mager's works.

These again suggested startling possibilities and a red-covered book in my cabin partially settled my doubts about the action of

colour and the help given by the spectrum. By this help I was able to locate the tanks on a small oil-driven Dutch boat in which I was going to Zanzibar. And in the tropics, on a day when atmospheric interference prevented the reception of wireless messages and at the same time even gold gave me no feeling, I felt that a world of new and scientific interest was open to the modern dowser if only the signs could rightly be interpreted.

As friends and relations were not only sceptical but seemingly doubtful of my sanity, I discontinued the use of the rod, and in order to work with colour, cut and painted wedges of wood which I could hold in the palm of my hand. In this way and when travelling by car or train I was able to detect minerals and water without creating suspicious doubts! And in using the hands alone I fancied I could more easily detect the differing reactions of minerals and mineralized waters than through the medium of the rod.

Later I spent a year of varying interest in North-Western Rhodesia on the land where I had first discovered I could feel underground water. This farm is situated on the edge of the dolomite formation and is quite obviously highly mineralized. On parts of it even small ant heaps consisted of thrown-up pellets of iron and copper ores. As, however, ownership of land here includes only surface rights, it may be of no great benefit to have mining operations within three hundred yards of your homestead. And as prospectors of concessions prefer to find more or less outcropping minerals on unappropriated land where no compensation must be paid, there is little financial benefit to the landowner to discover any but its surface possibilities, until the time may be ripe to do so.

By the courtesy of a prospector of the minerals concession of this district I was allowed the use of their specimens of minerals, and with the aid of M. Mager's rosette was able to find the colours, etc., to which they responded. All this was straightforward work, but the geological formations of the country were far from simple and understandable to the very inexperienced dowser with but an elementary knowledge of geology. The crystalline and metamorphic rocks with intrusions of granite, and the gneisses and schists made estimates of the depth of water, and probably of minerals, extremely difficult.

My first and a bad mistake was made not on this ground, but in dolomite rock. The prospectors of the minerals concession had found zinc and lumps of native silver in cracks of the dolomite, and were anxious to know of further deposits. M. Mager warns us that these covered cracks will carry the vibrations of minerals for a considerable distance, and he tells how their



vibrations will accumulate in places, and are often more strongly felt there than over the mineral itself. My only result, therefore, was a complete confirmation of M. Mager's findings, with the addition of a hardly-learned lesson that it would be wise to be less positive in future!

But dowzers are not the only people to make mistakes, and in the course of my rambles I came across three or four abandoned diggings for copper which I am persuaded would not have been made had a dowser been able to advise. Two of these diggings occurred beside kopjes which showed much copper staining on the surface stones. I have heard it said that copper stain is no proof of the presence of payable copper underneath. This may be so, but a dowser would say that where exploratory boring or digging is made on evidence of copper stain, particular notice must be taken of where the underground spring or water, which has caused this colouration, has come into contact with the copper deposits. In the two examples mentioned the excavations had been made parallel to the direction of 'feelingly' rich veins of copper, but twenty-five and forty feet away respectively.

On every hill or kopje in these parts springs or uprisings of water were felt, from which underground tributaries flowed down to the surrounding plains. These when followed up suddenly disappeared or very occasionally were lost in wetish earth. Very few of them came to the surface—confirming a belief that especially in countries having definite wet and dry seasons, and where streams and rivers often dry up during the latter months, some circulatory system of underground water must, and does, exist. The trees and plants, with their capillary action and long and strong roots, store up moisture, and these are aided also by the powerful attraction of the tropical and sub-tropical sun, which in widening angles drags up the water, with the result that at a certain depth of soil there is always some sense of dampness to be found.

Latterly there have been various letters in newspapers on the questions of deforestation and its possible or probable effect on the subsequent rainfall of a district. It appears strange that the functions of trees in regard to the ordinary processes of nature have been imperfectly understood or overlooked. Yet the effect of damp caused by a single large tree in close proximity to a homestead is an acknowledged fact.

The natural results, therefore, of deforestation on any large scale are that :—

1. The rich soil which has accumulated round, and clung to the roots of the trees, is gradually washed away, probably leaving a surface of stones and boulders.

2. No strong roots remain to attract and absorb water from the underground supply, and
3. There are no branches and leaves to act as storage for this moisture which in part was released into the atmosphere to be held in suspension until returned to the earth as soft, life-giving rain—and finally the rainfall, which was dependent on these natural processes, must proportionately be lessened.

It is still an open question whether deserts, as for example Arabia and the Sahara, were not caused by nomad man, who, during untold centuries, used and destroyed, but never replanted, leaving granite and other rocks to be weathered and disintegrated by heat and cold and, later, as sandy deserts to encroach on neighbouring lands.

We have what may well be examples of these processes in the age-long custom of the African native, who has cut down trees for hut building and firewood, and has used the soil for the growing of food products.

As the former became exhausted and the soil impoverished and unhealthy he has moved further afield to uncut timber and newer soil, to use both as wastefully and recklessly as before.

Fortunately the disastrous effect of the destruction of trees over large areas is becoming increasingly recognized, and in a September number of *East Africa* a plea was made for 'imagination, patience and foresight' in regard to afforestation, with the added warning that the 'regeneration of trees will take from 80 to 120 years' (this, I think, will depend on the kind of tree and the climate). The appeal might have been more forceful had the writer shown how that afforestation would in time encourage a more regular rainfall and gradually and generally improve the climatic conditions.

As we all know, trees have differing idiosyncrasies in regard to water, and in Africa the wild fig tree is considered to show the presence of water beneath its roots—and curiosity made me turn aside wherever possible to feel if this were true. The conclusion to which I came was that of the innumerable seeds dropped by touracos and other fig-eating birds none germinated unless directly over a stream of underground water. And it would appear to be a fact that the cultivated fig tree, if it waxes strong and bears fruit must have water beneath it. As this underground water is often at varying depths it would be interesting to know from dowsers if they think this idiosyncrasy of the fig tree is in part due to a vibratory feeling. It is well to warn them that botanists will consider this suggestion to show complete ignor-

ance of plant growth, in spite of being themselves aware that plants do respond to *electric* vibrations.

In the part of Rhodesia of which I am speaking there are many deposits of mercurial earth which, at first, and not allowing for its atomic weight, seemed to promise payable mineral underneath. This gave a reaction entirely different from anything else, and both a friend and myself felt our arms twisted upwards and outwards in a distinctly unpleasant manner. About this time deaths occurred among the trek oxen, and a post-mortem examination showed these deaths to be due to the condition of their livers. From enquiries of the native cattle 'boys' we found that some of the oxen had been in the habit of licking the earth under a particular bank. This earth we ourselves tasted and found it to have an astringent salty flavour and responded to mercurial tests. We had run out of coarse salt of which the cattle are very fond, and doubtless the daily mercurial lick with its known effect on the liver was the cause of the deaths which ceased after we barricaded up this source of supply.

Another effect of this mercurial soil was seen in a large field of tobacco plants where a wide belt of this earth had given a noticeably different colour to the leaves. What effect this might have on the taste of the tobacco is a matter for speculation, for the Tobacco Combines at this time temporarily discouraged its production in parts of South Africa thereby causing distress and heavy losses to the growers.

Space would not permit me to speak of the varied ways in which we tried out our dowsing 'sensitiveness', but we always felt that any apparent discovery lacked the confirmatory evidence of experienced and scientific dowsers.

For this reason alone a hearty welcome should be given to this new Society and publication which, due to our usual British caution, are both long overdue.

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## A YORUBA DOWSER

By S. LEITH-ROSS

**A**LTHOUGH I had heard rumours in various parts of Nigeria of men who were able to discover water beneath the soil and even to estimate at what depth it could be found, I unfortunately had not investigated these rumours and have actually seen only one native who might be called a dowser.

I was in Ilorin City, capital of Ilorin Province, Nigeria, in 1929, and wished to have a well dug in the compound of a small school

for native girls. The school stood on high ground, in the centre of the native town. The compound was some three-quarters of an acre in extent with the school buildings running along one side, and the rest open ground. There were wells in the surrounding compounds but the water supply was known to be poor, and in the dry season, which we were then in, many of the wells ran dry. The 'Chief of the Well Diggers' was called in, an elderly man who spoke Yoruba but who, from his looks, appeared to have some Hausa blood in him. Judging from his white gown and turban he was a Muhammadan, but in Ilorin Province Islam and paganism blend easily together. Accompanied by three or four satellites, he came into the compound and stood motionless by the entrance. He carried no instrument and made no movement with his hands. After one look round the compound he seemed to 're-collect' himself for a moment and then made an almost imperceptible forward motion with his chin. (These chin movements play a great part both in Yoruba and Hausa speech and can give a remarkably accurate idea of distance.) Immediately the men who were with him and who had been watching him closely sprang forward to a spot near the centre of the compound and drove a stake a little way into the ground. The dowser remarked in an offhand way that water would be found there, at a depth of about twenty feet, and walked away. I wanted to question him as to his methods, but it was one of the rare occasions on which I felt hostility on the part of a native and thought it wiser not to. Indeed the whole time I was under the impression that, except for earning his fee, he did not care whether he found water or not. If he had been on his mettle and really wished to find a good supply, his preparations might have been more elaborate.

Later on a well was dug in the spot he had indicated and water was found at twenty-three feet. The supply was not very good and the well was deepened another two feet, but though the water never actually failed, it remained muddy and came in slowly.

While the dowser was in the compound neither a native woman, who was with me, nor the workmen showed any sign of awe. They were interested, but evidently looked upon the incident as a quite ordinary one. When questioned, the intelligent and much-travelled native woman said she had heard of dowsers in other parts of Nigeria but knew no details and did not know of their using instruments. I did not ask her about metal divining nor have I heard of it from any other source.

The subject is certainly one that should be studied and, as in the native mind it does not seem to be connected with magic, it should not be too difficult to obtain information.

## WHAT IS SCENT?

By E. CHRISTIE

WHEN a dog searches for a mouse in the ground, it sniffs and blows and presently locates the exact position. A fox will get the exact position over a rabbit burrow. I get the exact position with the twig which rises at a vertical line, and if I *charge* my twig (with meat) it will point at the mouse.

I tried to find out if the dog tuned in with the wave-length by opening and shutting the nostril flaps as the diviner alters his twig, but was unable to come to a conclusion.

I was walking along a clay path a long time ago and noticed a great many footmarks. Selecting one with a particular pattern of brads, I took a pinch of the soil and pressed this flat. Using this as a sample, I followed the trail for some distance. I then traced a rabbit's trail threading in and out among many others in the snow. Some horsemen passed later, and selecting a particular shape of shoe mark I took a sample and traced the power. Holding my twig high up I could get the direction of the horse miles away as it followed the hounds, and could tell when it was at its home. For months after a horse has passed, the power is still pulling in the direction taken by the animal. Even now some of the old samples retain the power, after months of keeping in the house. Close up I have to follow the line—so has the dog. The holding of an actual 'sample' is not necessary. If I pass my right palm on a motor tyre mark I can then get the direction of the car when miles away. A fox came through and broke down a faulty fence; I passed my hand along the rail and followed the trail for a good distance and then located the fox in its lair. I could tell where the fox got over two gates.

I was at a friend's house and was coming away when he asked me if a stick against his hedge were mine. I took it up, passed my hand along it, put it aside, and, turning round, my twig pointed at a farm about a mile away, I said: 'Take that to Blank, you will find it is his!'

A boy had left his cycle in a copse—it had no rubber tyres—I took a pinch from the rim-mark and my twig pointed at the saddle, and turning round, I located the boy at the school—a long distance away.

Now, from that it would appear that it is not the particular make of tyre, but the person in the car magnetizing the trail. As I get the power in these cases stronger at different heights as the day wears, this will be what is known as 'scent', but I am not sure that the same thing applies to ordinary divining. So far I have been unable to hit upon a method of telling the distance.

By holding a letter in my right hand for a second and putting it aside, I can then get the direction of the writer in Wales ; but in one case, working with a smallish map, I thought the writer was at home in Surrey (her home is nearly in the line indicated). By putting my right palm on a Scots Magazine title page for a second, I could get the direction of the edition at the British Museum, Edinburgh (power blurred—many copies in different houses ?), Glasgow, and from the position by the map, Exeter ?

The Edition of 1743 will not charge the twig for that of 1796.

Now supposing I obtain with my twig the position of a writer in Rhodesia, I can then trace the power travelling towards him in the form of saw teeth, my twig pointing at a spot at intervals of a yard, so that it dips and rises as I walk along. Turning round, and stepping a yard to one side my twig will trace the power travelling back, in a similar way, my twig dipping and pointing at each spot as I walk along. If I go back a considerable distance I can pick up the power there, so possibly the power is projected round the world !

Where each spot occurs I locate a perpendicular line—as a bar magnet, and also the cardinal points of the compass and four concentric rings—zones, just as they are located at an apple tree.\*

I place my right palm upwards and put my left palm down on it for a second, and all is 'cut out'. This simple action will be found to prevent the bad effects of divining.

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## THE COCOS ISLAND TREASURE

By GEO. COOKNELL

(*Co-leader Cooknell-Stanton Cocos Expedition*)

**D**URING my lifetime (I am twenty-eight years of age) the expeditions which have left England for the lonely Cocos Island in search of the Great Treasure of Lima, said to have been buried on the island, have been legion. Of all the expeditions which have been, seen, and expended both time and money, not one of them has returned with a solitary piece of gold or silver. Nor yet have they proved that the treasure does not exist.

There are various methods of searching for treasure, the old, and still popular one (and I have yet to hear of it proving successful), with the aid of a chart, which we are supposed to believe has

\* It is best to state "apple" as some trees have the zone power as at the hop plant.

been handed down from generation to generation until the present time. In the event of any one of these countless charts being genuine, the time factor is against their usefulness. Nature, herself, has taken a hand during the intervening years. Old landmarks have shifted or been totally erased.

I have still to discover a good reason as to why any of the old buccaneers should be credited with making charts, for they were mostly illiterate men. Furthermore, in whose safe keeping could they place a chart? They knew not when or under what circumstances death would come upon them. They knew nothing about the old adage, 'Honour among thieves,' choosing to believe, as we do to-day, that it does not exist. The fact remains, that their practical hauls were of immense value, and not easily negotiable, even in those haphazard days. From this fact alone it is reasonable to assume that pirate hoards did and still do exist.

In recent years treasure hunters have staked their faith in more modern means of locating treasure, such as the Electrical Divining Instrument, and with no better result. I have handled one, and I can state with frankness that it was quite useless except at depths of a few inches.

Having disposed of charts, and being convinced that electrical divining instruments are useless, may I refer to one of the oldest professions in the world, about which very little is known, viz., Rhabdometry.

Moses, when his people were dying of thirst in the wilderness, struck a rock with a rod. That may or may not have been the birth of water divining, to which is allied metal divining. The first heard or seen of diviners in England was in the far-off days when Cornish tin mines were the mainstay of the European tin market. Diviners were imported for the purpose of locating new deposits of tin.

Divining was then done with a hazel twig and the fallacy still exists that a hazel twig is essential. This is far from being the case, as any kind of wood is efficient provided the sap is still in the twig.

W. E. Pogson discovered that the hands of a diviner, when approaching water, moved in a peculiar way, also when approaching metal. He invented a simple wire instrument to indicate accurately the movement of the hands, which, for want of a better name, he called the Motorscope.

I have proved the value of this instrument myself, both in locating the direction of water and metals and in indicating their exact depth. Its accuracy in the latter test is quite remarkable. I have never been more than six inches out in my estimation of the depth when using the Motorscope.

It is not generally known that a capable diviner can accurately

differentiate between metals, though the differentiation test is very simple; all that is required is that the diviner should have available a small piece of each species of metal.

We can now tabulate our reasons for the treasure remaining undiscovered.

1. Haphazard searches.
2. Unreliability of charts.
3. Doubtful capabilities of electrical instruments and their unsuitability for rough usage.

In spite of the many expeditions which have endeavoured to recover the treasure on Cocos, I and my colleagues have devised a method which will either prove, or disprove, the existence of treasure on the island, on the assumption that the treasure must be within easy reach of one or the other of the two landing places on the island.

This method consists of roughly dividing the land within a mile of each landing place into plots of about 100 feet square. The diviner, standing in the centre of each plot, will definitely know when he is near the metal. The usual procedure will then be followed, to get the exact location and depth, and finally to decide the species of metal underground.

Not a sod of earth will be upturned until it is definitely known that the precious metal exists immediately underground.

In this manner, hard labour, such as digging, which, in the tropics is not desired, will be reduced to an absolute minimum, and the treasure recovered with less toil than any previous expedition has entailed.

[The use of the Motorscope is described in the pamphlet *The Art of Water Finding*, included in the list of books at the end of the journal.

The finding of water by Moses in the wilderness is explained on grounds other than those of dowsing by Major C. S. Jarvis in his book, *Yesterday and To-day in Sinai*: Blackwood.—EDITOR.]

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## ANOTHER METHOD

By Captain J. R. H. TWEED

OF the two chief methods of water finding—the forked stick and the pendulum—the latter has several theoretical advantages.

The pendulum can do a number of things. It can gyrate clockwise and anti-clockwise and it can oscillate in any direction,



all of which movements have definite meanings for the expert. The forked stick on the other hand is limited to movements up and down, and many water finders only experience one of these reactions over underground water.

But the pendulum as an instrument for finding water has one very serious disadvantage. For all but the very expert, its movements are apt to be greatly affected by the unconscious suggestion of the manipulator. To illustrate this it is only necessary to cite a well-known experiment which is used to show the power of suggestion. A small weight at the end of six inches of cotton is provided and a piece of paper on which is drawn a circle with two straight lines at right angles passing through its centre.

The experimentors are invited to hold the suspended weight over the centre of the circle, close the eyes and concentrate their thoughts on the centre of the circle. The pendulum is found to hang motionless. They are then asked to do the same thing but concentrate on the circumference of the circle. The pendulum gyrates. Similarly if they concentrate on the lines drawn through the centre of the circle, the pendulum oscillates over whichever line is contemplated.

An instrument for water finding which I now use, and which may best be described as the suspended V instrument, retains the advantages of both the forked stick and pendulum, while for me, at any rate, it does not seem so susceptible to unconscious suggestion. These instruments are made of two lengths of clock spring each about 6 inches long rivetted together at one end and bound for about an inch at the rivetted ends with cotton or insulated copper wire.

The free ends of the spring are drilled, and through each hole is passed a length of silk thread. A thread is held in each hand one above the other and the ends of the V formed by the steel springs are drawn apart until the instrument looks like a bracket sign thus :— }

With this instrument held in front of the body and taking care to hold the right hand immediately over the left so that the instrument is upright and the threads in tension, I walk over the ground to be surveyed.

Whenever the instrument spins round anti-clockwise I put in a white peg, and when the instrument spins round clockwise, a red peg. Thus I continue moving backwards and forwards over the area.

If, owing to the various movements of the instrument, the pegs arrange themselves in three rows, I conclude that the central

row of white pegs indicates the line of an underground stream, and that the distance thence to the row of red pegs is the depth of the water from the surface. Sometimes only one point is found where the instrument turns anti-clockwise and points all round it are found where there is a clockwise reaction. Sometimes the red pegs on one side are further from the white pegs than on the other, in which case I make no guess at the depth of the underground stream.

I have been experimenting for some time with coloured instruments of this type applying Mager's methods. Although I have not yet done enough work to be able to say anything definite, such experiments as I have made are very encouraging. I hope before long to be able to say with some certainty whether or not the waters of an underground stream under investigation are potable.

At one place where the violet detector indicated a supply of drinkable water, in an area where no such water had then been found (although many brackish wells existed) a fresh water supply was actually found. But I have since heard that it became brackish later. If this is so, it may be due to water finding its way into the well from the surrounding sand, which was highly impregnated with salt.

Up to now I have evolved no satisfactory method of estimating yield although some guess can be made by comparing the relative intensity of the anti-clockwise reactions at the site under investigation and at other wells in the neighbourhood where the yield is known. The width of the area in which the anti-clockwise reaction takes place is also an assistance in making a guess at the probable yield. But it is not more than a guess. The percentage of approximately correct estimations of depth, on the other hand, is sufficiently high to justify a definite statement when siting a well.

I do not claim originality for what I have called the suspended V instrument. It was described to me in a rather cruder form by a man in Persia who had it, I believe, from that well-known dowser, Major Pogson.

May I conclude this description by expressing the hope that the B.S.D. will do all that it can to impress upon every one that, although dowsing in itself is a harmless amusement, the siting of a well is a serious business, in which a great deal of money and labour may be wasted. A well cannot be sited with any degree of certainty by anyone, however sensitive, unless he has considerable experience. Expert dowsers, I believe, take several days before saying with conviction that water will be found at a certain depth, and nothing brings the art into

disrepute so readily as when an inexperienced person walks over the ground and after a few minutes gives a definite opinion, which may be right, but is equally likely to be quite wrong.

A farmer once told me that one of his cows having been taken ill the night before, he had sent for the 'Vet', whom he had found to be a very clever man. The Vet, he said, had taken one look at the cow and said at once, 'Farmer George, that cow is bad, her may live and her may die'. 'And he was absolutely right,' said the farmer. 'This morning the cow died.'

I am afraid that some dowsers of the past have endeavoured to gain a reputation on much the same lines. But a modern engineer demands something much better than this before he starts a bore.

Dowsing therefore needs investigation by a large number of people who are prepared to treat the phenomena they encounter with the strictest scientific accuracy, not trying to make facts fit a preconceived theory, but holding theories only so long as they cover all the phenomena observed.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

*The Editor,*

*The British Society of Dowzers' Quarterly Journal.*

SIR,

Much has been written of late on Water Divining, but we still appear to be without a satisfactory explanation of the various phenomena that occur when a diviner operates.

It would also be interesting to know why, in some cases, the water diviner may be entirely wrong in the interpretation of his results, i.e., the twig (or whatever he may use) may turn vigorously and the diviner may assert that a large quantity of water will be met with at such and such a depth. Subsequent excavations may prove him to be entirely incorrect in the quantity of water, or in the depth, or on both counts.

That there is certainly no fake about the 'twig' turning was demonstrated to the writer very definitely not long ago. Two individuals, one a geologist and the other an engineer (and total strangers), met at a spot and experimented with a piece of copper wire bent in the form of a 'V'. The wire was held lightly between forefinger and thumb, and on reaching a certain spot the

wire continued to revolve slowly, with both individuals. When one of the protruding ends of the wire was held between the finger and thumb of a third party, it was found it continued to revolve until considerable resistance was set up by pinching the wire firmly. It was known that water was present in the vicinity at a depth of over 100 feet below surface, the spot in question being close to a borehole.

Would it be possible that the effect was due to a long length of steel tubing which lined the borehole?

The engineer in question stated that he lost the power entirely if he walked about in snow, and allowed some of it to collect on the soles of his boots.

J. P. LEGRAND.

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## REVIEWS

*Bulletin de l'Association des Amis de la Radiesthésie.*

*Report of General Meeting on June 9th, 1933, p. 223 :*

After a year the Society numbers 600 members. Seven meetings have been organized in the provinces.

*Moral Results from Congress by Armand Viré, p. 230.*

*Report to International Congress, p. 235 :*

Societies in Great Britain, Lyons, Germany and Austria.

*Lecture by M. Brouard (Advocate), p. 239 :*

Who is a diviner? Someone who seeks springs. In medical work it is important that the diviner shall work with a qualified medical man. The diviner can discuss and fix his fee in advance and is legally entitled to it in French law. With treasure one half belongs to the finder.

*Reply by M. Turenne to M. Dard, p. 246 :*

Electric sign of elements and simple compounds.

*The Construction of Spiral Pendulums by M. Pitois (Engineer), p. 250 :*

Easily made by cutting spirals from coated card or metal.

*Visit to M. Branly by R. P. Trémolet, p. 251 :*

Discussion on reflexion of rays emitted by metals and on the penetrability of various substances.

*Excursion to Metz by Joseph Winter, p. 253 :*

Thirty members. Various tests made.

*Questions and replies, p. 256.*

*Radiation-Perception and Medicine, p. 269 :*

Description of cure of woman affected with serious sclerosis.

F.H.

# British Society of Dowsers.

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## MEETING

*(weather permitting) at Backwoods, Lindfield,  
On Saturday, June 2nd, 1934.*

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1.—Members are invited to arrive at Backwoods about 12.30 p.m. There will be a picnic lunch at 1 and tea at 4.

2.—To reach Backwoods cars should turn off the main road through Lindfield at the stone watering trough on the edge of Lindfield Common, south of the village pond; proceed down the left of the three roads for about 170 yards; pass through the gateway by the bowling green, and continue to the end of the lane where Backwoods is situated.

3.—Cars will meet the train which leaves Victoria at 11.25 a.m., and arrives at Haywards Heath at 12.14; would those intending to come by train please notify Colonel Bell by Wednesday, May 30th?

4.—The tests, all of which must take place out of doors, are as follows :—

- (A) Locating pieces of silver and lead buried in a field.
- (B) Identifying the contents of cardboard boxes (samples provided).
- (C) Discriminating between good and brackish water in bottles.
- (D) Gauging the depth and flow in a well.
- (E) Locating the position of a large water pipe.
- (F) Tracing a boy to his place of concealment.
- (G) Locating injuries in certain persons.



## BOOKS ON DOWSING

*The Divining Rod*, by Sir William Barrett and Theodore Besterman:  
Methuen, 18/-.

*Springs of Water and how to discover them by the Divining Rod*, by  
B. Tompkins : Hurst and Blackett, 5/-.

*Water Diviners and their Methods*, by H. Mager (translation) :  
Bell, 16/-.

*The Modern Dowser*, by Le Vicomte Henry de France (translation) :  
Bell, 3/6.

*The Mystery of the Divining Rod Solved*, (how to locate springs and  
to gauge depth), in two parts, by Ernest Christie, obtainable  
from the author: Pollingfold, Ockley, Dorking. Post  
free the two 1/8.

*The Art of Water Finding*, by M. E. Pogson : obtainable from the  
Hon. Sec. B.S.D., post free 1/8.

*Dowsing*, by Thomas Fiddick : obtainable from the author, The  
Cross, Camborne, Cornwall, -/6.

*Les Sourciers et leurs Procédés*, by H. Mager.

*Traité complet des secrets de la Baguette et de la Pendule des Sourciers*,  
by Frère Padey, 65 fr.

*Le Sourcier Moderne*, by Henry de France, 10 fr.

*Comment j'opère*, by Abbé Mermet, 20 fr.

*La Radiesthésie* (explaining Abbé Bouly's method), by M. A.  
Capron, 15 fr.

*Tu Seras Sourcier*, by Emile Christophe, 20 fr.

*Investigacion de aguas subterraneas*, by Bartolome Darder Pericas.

*Handbuch der Wünschelrute*, by Carl Graf von Klinckowstroem and  
Rudolf Freiherr von Maltzahn.

*Die Wünschelrute*, by Hans Falkinger.